

**Work Session
August 5, 2003**

The Montgomery County Board of Commissioners met in a work session on Tuesday, August 5, 2003 at 4:00 p.m. in the Commissioners Conference Room. A full board was present. *Chairman Maness called the meeting to order and the following was heard:*

Presentation of the Revaluation Process

Mrs. Vickie Maness, Montgomery County Tax Administrator was present to explain the upcoming revaluation process and schedule to the County Commissioners. John Baucom, the appraiser for the tax department was also present. Mrs. Maness said the revaluation will come into effect January 1, 2004. She presented the schedule of values to the board and explained that a public hearing will need to be set around the August 19 meeting and then at another meeting the board will need to adopt the schedule of values.

There was a discussion on open land and how it is appraised.

Mrs. Maness said we study every sell that comes through the Register of Deeds.

Chairman Maness asked what if people say their appraisal is too high? Mrs. Maness explained that there is an appeal process.

Mr. Baucom went through an example for the board to show and explain how the revaluation process works.

Chairman Maness asked if every county goes through the same appeal process? Mrs. Maness said no, but the principle is the same.

Commissioner Corbett said how do you judge the age of the home? Mr. Baucom said we have to go on the information that we have.

Commissioner Corbett asked Mr. Baucom how many doors have been knocked on? Mr. Baucom said 1,500 to 2,000; he said it is hard to say.

Commissioner Knight asked if the same \$50 for homes is used for singlewides? Mr. Baucom said no, it is based on cost.

Chairman Maness asked how do you determine whether to knock on the door or not? Mr. Baucom said it depends on if they have a mean dog, etc.

Chairman Maness asked how does the appraiser know if the house is built well? Mr. Baucom said experience. Mr. Matthews explained that appraisers have to go through certification.

Commissioner Corbett asked how do you go through the appraisal of a business like Jordan Lumber? Mr. Baucom said I only appraise the structure. Mrs. Maness said the equipment inside is turned in when personal property is listed. She said help comes in from the State if we need it.

Mrs. Maness said all tables in the book are applied throughout the revaluation process.

Mr. Matthews asked Mrs. Maness to explain subdivisions/raw land. Mrs. Maness said once it has been platted we have to value the land as subdivided lots.

Chairman Maness asked if the appraisals for Tillery had been worked out? Mr. Matthews said yes, but I am not sure if they are satisfied.

Ms. Linda Beaulieu asked if the schedule of values would be available for the public to view? Mrs. Maness said yes. And we will get with Laura about advertising for the public hearing.

Issues Requested That Were Revisited by Commissioner Bostic:

Montgomery Fellows Scholarship Program

Commissioner Bostic said the issue with the Montgomery Fellows Scholarship Program has been settled. He said the 2-cent tax increase was to be used for three different things. Mr. Bostic said ironically, only one of them was done away with and that was the scholarship program.

Ag Center Rental Policy

Commissioner Bostic said the Ag Center was built with grant money and tax money. He said people that pay taxes have a vested interest in that building and my thing is why shouldn't they be able to use it? I am for preserving and taking care of, but if they have a vested interest in it, I don't see why they shouldn't have the opportunity to use it.

Chairman Maness asked if anyone has any question on this issue. Mr. Maness said Commissioner Bostic I think you know where I stand on this issue; I kind of took this on as a personal thing as a commissioner to see if we couldn't get it fixed up. I have no problem with anyone renting that building as long as we can keep it from being torn up. I think that the policy that the board has in place and has voted on and have discussed several times is a pretty good policy. He said one thing I have found out about in working as a commissioner and in business, you put something in place you have to follow it along pretty well if you don't it will fall apart. Mr. Maness said I think we had a building down there that if we wouldn't have jumped on it hard and stopped what was going on and put a policy in place it wouldn't have been but another year or so, we wouldn't have had a building. He said I think the policy that the commissioners put in place was a very good policy. That is my feeling.

Commissioner Morris said I agree. She said we have discussed this many times and have voted on this and my vote still stands.

Commissioner Knight said down in Mt. Gilead at the community center we have a similar policy. He said we do make some exceptions. We could not stick to organizations and churches and things like that because there were people that had weddings, wedding receptions, birthday parties, and family reunions. He said there were people who needed to use the facility that were not part of a group. We felt that it being a community center, people should be able to use it. We monitor these things closely because we made sure that when they say it was a family reunion, it was a family reunion. We had control. We had to look at it close to make sure the community center was available to the community but we watched renting it to individuals to come in there to have a dance, maybe for profit. He said we need to look at the needs of the community. He said we may need to look at the restrictions.

Chairman Maness said I am not sure what the problem is, we just don't have control.

Commissioner Knight said we would have someone checking on things.

Dry Creek Water Line

Commissioner Bostic said Tim Carpenter called this morning and said he gave Mr. Matthews a memo regarding Dry Creek. Mr. Matthews said yes, I have it here and went over the memo for the board. The memo is as follows:

MEMORANDUM

Date: August 5, 2003

To: Lee Matthews, Manager, Montgomery County

From: Tim Carpenter, Hobbs, Upchurch & Associates, P.A.

RE: Dry Creek Well Samples

In May, 2003 Tommy Blankenship on Montgomery County Water System and I pulled well samples from approximately 20 wells on Dry Creek Road and Powell Store Road. Of these 20 samples 12 tested positive for Total Coliform and 4 tested positive for Fecal Coliform. Fecal Coliform contamination indicates evidence that there is some contamination possibly by septic leaching into the wells.

Fecal Coliform contamination of wells constitutes a critical health risk and Total Coliform Contamination constitutes a chronic health risk. Based on the above, an extension of a water main to the Dry Creek area will stand a very good chance of being funded by the NC Rural Center. Rural Center Grants will involve a local match from the applicant in the amount of 10% (minimum) to receive the maximum bonus points. The maximum funding available from the Rural Center is \$400,000. The Dry Creek Water Main Extensions was previously estimated to be approximately \$400,000 and based on a \$400,000 project the Local Match will have to be at least \$40,000 from the applicant. The deadline for submitting an application to the Rural Center will be sometime around the end of September, with funding announcements to follow around the end of December 2003.

The only complication to this application is that Montgomery County Water District 2 has pending funding from the Rural Center that was obtained in 2000. This funding was part of the Water District 2 total project and will assist in funding a new one million gallon storage tank and high service pump station at the Water Treatment Plant. Now that all other Water District 2 projects have been bid we will proceed towards bidding this project to complete the Water District 2 projects. Montgomery County will need to submit a letter to the Rural Center requesting that the funding be extended. The County will also need to submit a letter requesting that Montgomery County be granted an exemption for having two active Rural Center projects (Water District 2 and the proposed Dry Creek Water Main extensions). Hobbs, Upchurch & Associates will assist the County in drafting these letters.

One possibility for expediting the process for making the extension of the Dry Creek Water Main would be to proceed with the design and permitting of the water main prior to announcement of funding. The plans and specifications could be prepared and permitted on or before the announcement of funding for the project. This would mean that if funding of the project was approved the County could proceed immediately to bidding and construction of the project therefore expediting the timeline for completion by approximately three to four months.

Commissioner Bostic said my problem is why should that area be treated as second-class citizens if there wasn't money available I wouldn't have said anything. That is the problem I have had with it.

Chairman Maness said I have answered this several times.

Commissioner Knight asked what cause the county to ask for grant money for the other projects? Mr. Matthews said I am not sure what reason the county applied for grants. Commissioner Bostic said some of it was loans.

Commissioner Morris said if other areas were tested, they would probably need the water also. It is a money issue. She said I have already voted on this also.

Commissioner Knight said I have seen lines go to houses and there are few houses on the roads. He said I have a recommendation. We don't plan ahead of time. He said we should have known it would be very expensive to get water to these people. Apply for the money then. If we would have ran the pipe on Hwy. 731 instead of McCallum Pond we wouldn't have had this problem.

Chairman Maness said the commissioners six or seven years ago had the foresight to expand the water system. He said we didn't make money last year because of improvements. He said I know that Dry Creek needs water. He said Mrs. Morris mentioned other areas that have bad water. I would love to run the water everywhere. But we have to prioritize, we have to be fair.

Commissioner Knight said as Mr. Matthews mentioned the money will be available in December and we need to do our homework and be ready. If we have more money in the water fund we can do that. He said Dry Creek could have water by summer.

Mr. Matthews said we can be proactive instead of reactive.

Commissioner Morris said I am concerned about leaving money for repairs. Mr. Matthews said yes, for catastrophic events.

Commissioner Bostic said you are talking about leaving a decent fund balance. If something catastrophic happens it will be a federal and state problem.

Commissioner Corbett said bad water is a countywide problem.

Commissioner Knight said we need to do our homework.

Commissioner Bostic said grant money is on approval, what are those people in Dry Creek going to do?

Chairman Maness said there are a lot of people in the same situation.

Commissioner Bostic said these were on the list.

Commissioner Knight said he looked over the minutes real good and understands what happened.

Highland/Brutonville Centers

Commissioner Bostic said it doesn't matter what I say it won't change. There is no need to waste your time.

Convenience Site Hours of Operation

We have had several requests to expand the hours of operation at the Blaine and Swift Island convenience sites, and close an hour early at all sites during the winter months. Mr. Matthews said he invited Mr. John Callicutt to prepare a financial analysis of the costs for adding more hours on Sundays to Blaine and Swift Island, and the cost savings of closing all site one hour early during non-daylight savings time. His analysis is attached as Enclosure #6. I added an extra month (June) to his calculations to coincide with our fiscal year. It would cost us \$1,036.80 to increase the hours at Blake and Swift Island. However, we would save \$5,869.80 by closing all sites at 6:00 p.m. between November 1 and April 1 each year. Therefore, the county's net savings would be \$4,833 per year. Mr. Callicutt was present to help answer any questions.

There was a discussion on trash that is left on the outside of the dumpsites. Commissioner Knight asked if it is during the hours and days the dumpsites aren't opened? Commissioner Morris asked if the workers still go through the trash to see whose trash it is.

Mr. Callicutt said a lot of the trash outside the dumpsite at the Pee Dee and Swift Island is from Stanly County. He also said the Sheriff's Department issues verbal warnings. He said a lot of times we can't find out where they are at. Over the years it has gotten better. He said we still have illegal dumping. He said the county should be lauded for having twelve sites. He explained that items weighing over 500 lbs. is a misdemeanor.

Chairman Maness said Randolph County only has three sites and one of those is the landfill.

Mr. Callicutt said Bill Hamilton also helps us out.

Mr. Matthews said it is convenient for our citizens to have 12 sites.

Commissioner Morris said it is good we have cooperation between the Sheriff's Department and the Maintenance Department.

The board told Mr. Callicutt they appreciated his work and the other workers as well.

Commissioner Knight asked why did you stop letting people get stuff out of the dumpster. Mr. Callicutt explained that it was for health and safety reasons. He said we have no first aid facility and there are a lot of germs. He said I addressed this in 1994. He said once it is in the open top it is going to the dump.

Commissioner Bostic suggested maybe getting a 12 x 12 building with racks and shelves and let people put stuff that is good that they don't want anymore in it and at the end of the day throw it in the dumpster. He said we could have one on each side of the county.

Mr. Callicutt said that is a good idea but he is concerned with liability.

Mary Anderson from the Courier Tribune said in Randolph County there is a corner designated for good stuff.

Chairman Maness said we need to check into it.

The board agreed to carry this issue forward to the regular session.

Almetta Armstrong was at the meeting and she commended the board on its helping citizens. She talked about how bad the water is in Dry Creek. She said many people have had to buy systems. It would be wonderful to have running water. We have to buy salt every three months. If I have a little bit of water I can't deny the neighbors water. She said we pay taxes too and we are not getting a lot of benefit from those taxes. She said I know you have to make a lot of sacrifices and we appreciate you.

County Manager's Report

County Manager Lee Matthews gave the following report:

Exotic Animal Ordinance - He received a copy of the ordinance from Chatham and Catawba County. Chairman Maness said right now we have nothing in place, correct? Mr. Matthews said that is correct. I will be bringing more information back to you.

Pay Study - Mr. Matthews asked the board their opinion about doing a pay study on the county employees. The board said it would be fine. Mr. Matthews suggested maybe Commissioner Morris, Pauline Smith in payroll, and himself as part of the committee to oversee this. Commissioner Morris agreed to do this. Commissioner Corbett said he would like it compared with private industry.

Radio Communication Fees - Mr. Matthews said he has had communication with the managers and clerks regarding this. He asked them to go back to the board and see if they remember anything about this. He said it is not based on population because some of the smaller towns are paying more. He said maybe we could come up with a new formula. He said he realizes there was a reason it was put into place so they wouldn't have to have dispatchers. Mr. Matthews said he thought maybe a commissioner could go with him. Chairman Maness said you need to take a commissioner with you and if one can't go you can go by yourself. Mr. Matthews said Star is claiming double taxation.

Commissioner Knight said the \$1.10 on everyone phone bill, the towns are paying if they have a telephone. Why are we charging them?

Mr. Matthews said it was put into place around 1970. He said you are right we may need to look into it. Commissioner Knight said 911 is for all taxpayers.

Chairman Maness said this thing needs to come to a head. He said one commissioner and Mr. Matthews needs to go to the towns.

Commissioner Corbett said the 911 surcharge needs to be put on the agenda for the next meeting. Commissioner Bostic said we need to cut it. Commissioner Corbett agreed. Chairman Maness said we need to look at it carefully.

Commissioner Corbett said I have a problem with other citizens in towns paying and Star is not.

Commissioner Bostic asked about the budget amendment that was to be voted on in the regular session. He reference enclosure #6. He said is there a difference? Mr. Matthews said around \$1000. Chairman Maness asked for an explanation. Mr. Matthews said the board agreed to get the equipment and the first year was covered under the proposal. Mr. Bostic was referring to the note in the packet that said I elected to purchase the continuing maintenance next year. Commissioner Morris said it is coming from 911 Funds. Commissioner Corbett said that is not

Mr. Bostic's point. Chairman Maness said we authorize purchases. He said I know he didn't mean anything by this, but he needs to realize that we authorize the purchases. Mr. Matthews said he would straighten it out.

Troy Town Hall Discussion -Mr. Matthews said we are talking with computer vendors and also staffing deciding who goes and who stays at the office. He said we are also looking at financing and leasing. He said the Local Government Commission will have to approve it.

Commissioner Corbett asked about the price. Mr. Matthews said \$300,000. He said the appraisal on the building is \$315,000.

Commissioner Bostic said I hate to be against everything. We have the jail issue and the courthouse renovation issue. He said I will never vote for this.

Chairman Maness said no one has made the decision. There are a lot of issues that we have. We need to study this real hard.

Commissioner Morris asked Mr. Matthews if he thought the town would rent the building to the county? Mr. Matthews said they might. They said they would entertain the idea, but their first choice was to sell.

New Position in the Jail - Commissioner Corbett asked if the Sheriff has hired anyone for the new position in the jail? Mr. Matthews said yes, but as soon as he hired someone, he had a lady that was pregnant to quit. He still has one vacancy. Mr. Matthews said the Sheriff received 60+ applications for the position in the jail.

Jail Study -Commissioner Knight said I haven't heard anything about the jail in a long time. Mr. Matthews said that request for proposals were going to go out for an architect this month and he would be bringing them to the board for approval.

Chairman Maness said we can pick a plan, we need money. Mr. Matthews said part of that will be financing of the jail.

Community Buildings - Chairman Maness said we need to contact those in charge of the community buildings about their allocation. He and Commissioner Corbett said they are starting to hear about it.

Commissioner Corbett said he has talked with representatives of three of the community buildings (Eldorado, Ophir, and Uwharrie)

Commissioner Morris said Little River community is excited about the allocation.

Commissioner Corbett said he explained the reimbursement process.

Montgomery Community College - Mr. Matthews said he wanted to inform the board that MCC was going to be having aerobic classes at the Ag Center again. He said they have been working around the folks that use the facility on a regular basis.

Chairman Maness said there is a lot going on at the Ag Center and people are working together.

Commissioner Corbett said he would like to see the fair come back to the Ag Center.

Chairman Maness said he would like the board to go by the Ag Center and look at the center because more work has been done and it looks good.

Rural Planning Organization - Mr. Matthews said the Rural Planning Organization is trying to establish a committee made up of representatives from the towns, EMS, etc. The meeting will be Thursday, August 7, 2003 at 1:30 p.m.

Drawing Down of Narrows Dam - Mr. Matthews said he found out for Mr. Corbett that the drawing down of Narrows Dam would be for 10 days.

Flag Pole at the Rescue Squad - Mr. Matthews said he found out that the two flags that the Rescue Squad were going to fly are the American Flag and the Rescue Squad Flag.

Commissioner Morris said the county has an ordinance stating which flags can be flown.

Committees – Resource Team - Mr. Matthews said that the Montgomery County Resource team is needing a commissioner to serve on their board. They meet quarterly and they are a liaison for different groups. He said they also have subcommittees. Linda Beaulieu from the Montgomery Herald said they meet four times a year.

Commissioner Knight said he would serve on the committee. He said he heard they were going to do something on teen pregnancy and he would like to be involved in it.

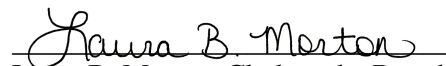
Items Carried Forward to the Regular Session

- Set Public Hearing for Schedule of Values for Revaluation
- Convenience Site Hours

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.


William D. Maness, Chairman




Laura B. Morton, Clerk to the Board